

Amendments to the Claims:

1. (currently amended) A method of power control for a transmitter in a cellular communication system comprising the steps of:
 - determining power control data in response to a quality parameter of a communication between a base station and a communication unit;
 - communicating the power control data between the base station and the communication unit;
 - determining that a transmit power of the transmitter exceeds a threshold;
 - determining that a quality level of the communication between the communication unit and the base station cannot be achieved when the transmit power of the transmitter exceeds the threshold;
 - in response to determining that a quality level of the communication between the communication unit and the base station cannot be achieved when the transmit power of the transmitter exceeds the threshold, entering a reduced power mode of operation by communicating power down power control data between the base station and the communication unit;
 - operating in the reduced power mode by communicating power control data corresponding to a reduced transmit power level that allows communication at a reduced data rate between the communication unit and the base station; and
 - exiting the reduced power mode when a quality characteristic of a data communication between the communication unit and the base station is improving by communicating power up power control data between the base station and the communication unit.
2. (original) A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the power control is an uplink power control and the power control data is transmitted from the base station to the communication unit.
3. (original) A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the power control is a downlink power control and the power control data is transmitted from the communication unit to the base station.

4. (previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the reduced transmit power level is substantially zero.

5. (previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the power control data communicated in the reduced power mode is power down control values.

6. (canceled).

7. (previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the step of exiting comprises transmitting power up power control data until the transmit power corresponds to a power level determined in response to the quality parameter.

8. (previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the step of exiting comprises transmitting power up power control data until the transmit power corresponds to a power level corresponding to the power level prior to entering the reduced power mode.

9. (previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein a duration of the reduced power mode is less than a data re-transmission interval associated with the communication between the communication unit and the base station.

10. (canceled).

11. (canceled).

12. (previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 1 further comprising the step of determining that an interference level exceeds a threshold and in response entering the reduced power mode.

13. (previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 1 further comprising the step of determining that a propagation characteristic exceeds a threshold and in response entering the reduced power mode.

14. (original) A method as claimed in claim 13 wherein the propagation characteristic is a path loss of a communication link supporting the communication between the communication unit and the base station.

15. (previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 1 further comprising the step of determining that a duration of the reduced power mode exceeds a threshold and in response exiting the reduced power mode.

16. (canceled).

17. (previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 1 further comprising the step of determining that an interference level is below a threshold and in response exiting the reduced power mode.

18. (previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 1 further comprising the step of determining that a propagation characteristic is below a threshold and in response exiting the reduced power mode.

19. (previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 18 wherein the propagation characteristic is a path loss of a communication link supporting the communication between the communication unit and the base station.

20. (previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 1 further comprising the steps of:
determining an expected interference level for a plurality of communication units including the communication unit;
determining a total expected interference level; and
entering the communication unit into the reduced power mode if the total expected interference level exceeds a threshold.

21-23. (canceled).

24. (currently amended) An apparatus for power control for a transmitter in a cellular communication system, the apparatus comprising:

means for determining power control data in response to a quality parameter of a communication between a base station and a communication unit;

means for communicating the power control data between the base station and the communication unit;

means for determining that a transmit power of the transmitter exceeds a threshold;

means for determining that a quality level of the communication between the communication unit and the base station cannot be achieved when the transmit power of the transmitter exceeds the threshold;

means for entering a reduced power mode of operation by communicating power down power control data between the base station and the communication unit, in response to the determining that a quality level of the communication between the communication unit and the base station cannot be achieved when the transmit power of the transmitter exceeds the threshold;

means for operating in the reduced power mode by communicating power control data corresponding to a reduced transmit power level that allows communication at a reduced data rate between the communication unit and the base station; and

means for exiting the reduced power mode when a quality characteristic of a data communication between the communication unit and the base station is improving by communicating power up power control data between the base station and the communication unit.